In accordance with the practices and usages customary amongst banks and in conformity with provisions of statutes governing public sector banks and financial institutions as also the provisions of Public Financial Institution (Obligation as to Fidelity and Secrecy) Act, 1983, further details cannot be divulged.

Non-Availability of Anti-Venom Medicines in Rural Areas

1892. SHRI YERRA NARAYANASWAMY: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have con ducted any study as to the availability of anti-venom medicines in rural areas;

(b) if so, what are the findings of such study;

(c) whether it is a fact that antidotes for snake bites are just not available in rural areas;

(d) how does Government propose to ensure availability of anti-venom medicines in rural areas; and

(e) steps proposed in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI SALEEM IQBAL SHERVANI): (a) and (b) No such study has been conducted.

(c) to (e) Snake bite treatment is available in the Primary Health Centres and Government Hospitals and the required antidotes are procured by the State Health Department as per local requirements from the vaccine producing institutes viz., Central Research Institute, Kasauli; Haffkine Bio-Pharmaceutical Corporation Ltd., Bombay and Kirtg Institute of Preventive Medicine, Chennai.

Revamping excise duty structure

1893. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have recently decided to revamp the country's excise duty structure;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government have found any bottlenecks in the existing excise duty structure; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the extent to which the latest excise duty structure would be effective?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) to (d) Reform of tax structure is a continuous and on-going process. The present central excise duty structure is still characterised by multiplicity of tax rates, existence of a number of exemptions which are based on different criteria and multiple nature of commodity taxes collected as excise duty under different enactments. A number of measures have been taken in the recent past to rationalise and simplify the excise duty structure and make it more transparent. These include reduction in dispersal of rates, replacement of specific rates of duty with ad valorem rates on a number of commodities, with-drwal of a large number of end-use based exemptions, extension of Modvat scheme to pertroleum products, capital goods and processed textile fabrics and simplification of procedures. This has brought more transparency in excise duty structure and helped in reducing classification disputes.

Ajanta, Ellora and Elephanta Caves

1894. MISS SAROJ KHAFARDE: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Ajanta, Ellora and Elephanta caves in Maharashtra are in very bad shape despite charging of entry fee from the tourists;